



Summer

# Volunteer View

## Two Pokagon Volunteers Featured in Recent “Outdoor Indiana” Editions

By: Fred Wooley, Pokagon State Park Interpretive Naturalist  
Not to usurp the thunder of **The Volunteer View**, but our IDNR **Outdoor Indiana** magazine ran two articles this year featuring two hardworking volunteers at Pokagon State Park.

Actually, **The Volunteer View** did get the scoop on one volunteer, Ellsworth Smith as he was



Ellsworth Smith enjoys a beautiful spring day on the front deck of the Pokagon State Park Nature Center with an arm full of his favorite plant!

featured in the Spring Issue of **The View**. Ellsworth is from the Fort Wayne area and makes regular trips to Pokagon State Park for the purpose of pulling garlic mustard. The July-August issue of **Outdoor Indiana** ran a wonderful article on garlic mustard, penned by former Mounds State Park Seasonal Interpreter, Stephanie Keevil. It covered all aspects of the plant

and, of course, addressed its eradication. One means of eradication is pulling, and no one takes it more seriously than Ellsworth Smith. Ellsworth met with IDNR photographer, John Maxwell, and John captured some great shots of Ellsworth in action. One such photo ran in that issue of **Outdoor Indiana**.

As an update on Ellsworth, with this growing season now behind us, we have him recorded as working 136.5 hours at Pokagon State Park, pulling garlic mustard! That is a huge effort! That is a lot of plants, removed from the seed providing pool. Not only did Ellsworth pull here at Pokagon, but spent some time at Spring Mill State Park and at our Gene Stratton Porter Home State Historic Site in Rome City, Indiana.

Thank you Ellsworth! We do not pay a lot, which is the definition of volunteering, but we are tickled that we have been able to provide the ink

we have on this great project to save our natural resources and on this great and dedicated volunteer.

A second volunteer to be highlighted in **Outdoor Indiana** is James Clary. James appeared in the “Hoosier Profile” column of the September-October issue. We featured James and his unique Eagle Scout project that he did at the main beach. There, James installed a bio-engineered, native glacial stone seawall. This involved incredible planning and organization, truckloads of stones, flats of native plants, and a lot of people power in the form of scouts, family, friends, and park employees. It has to be one of the most involved and thorough Eagle Projects to ever occur at Pokagon.

James mother, Julie Clary took a lot of photographs of the project and four of those appeared in the magazine. As a side note, Julie’s mother, Janet Ahlersmeyer was a volunteer at the Pokagon Nature Center back in the mid 1980’s. So, some 20 years later, it was a treat to have Janet back in the park, volunteering with food preparation during workdays when third-generation volunteer, James, was hard at it.

Thank you volunteers and thank you **Outdoor Indiana!**



James Clary (third boy from left, in third row – wearing red shirt and ball cap) stands with his September work crew next to his Eagle Scout project; a natural, glacial stone seawall, at the Pokagon State Park main beach.

## Brown County Volunteers “Step” Up!

By: Jim Eagleman, Brown County State Park Interpreter

At probably all DNR properties and interpretive centers, the summer of 2007 was busy and eventful. Brown County staff spent the hot summer offering events and activities to lodge guests and campers before the heat of the day became overwhelming. This summer will go down in the annals of weather journals as a high temperature-high humidity, prolonged drought from early May to mid-August! As they said everyday in Brown County this summer, “...she’s a hot one!”. It will also be remembered as a summer of staff resourcefulness and dedication.

A Smokey Safety Day on Saturday, August 11, 2007 started out normally. We scheduled games and contests with prizes throughout the day, with park volunteer and 2001 DNR Volunteer of the Year award winner, Ginny Hanner helping as she always does with the popular Smokey coloring sheet contest. Ginny’s son, Pat EuDaly and wife, Suzannah also helped. Pat held the controls and manipulated robotic Smokey to the delight of all youngsters. Both Pat and Suzannah, and Ginny are also members of *MC Axe and Fire Crew*, a group of professional firefighters and educators who perform at several schools and Indiana DNR sites. Their message of home fire safety to schoolchildren that evening complimented Smokey’s message for a nice turnout of campers. The theme: to be safe with all open fires.

Interpreters, Susan Douglas, Brittany Davis and part-time interpreter/ volunteer Bob Welsch, helped with Smokey Bingo, Smokey birthday cake celebration and Smokey prizes. Jim Eagleman gave a morning talk on the use of prescribed fire tools under the large program tent. Long-time volunteer Terri Warne and husband Brad as Smokey were also on hand all day. The Brown County Volunteer Fire Department arrived in the afternoon with their fire truck for Smokey to ride through the campgrounds. Promoting the evening program with MC Axe at the Nature Center amphitheater, Smokey and the fire truck certainly got a lot of attention from all the campers!

All was proceeding well, until we heard a yell

from the storage room in the auditorium. Terri Warne had fallen off a small, elevated walkway in the A-V booth as she was bringing out more Smokey items. As she fell, she landed wrong on her ankle. After limping around a few minutes, she hobbled out to continue with activities. Terri is also a professional physical therapist and knew later in the day it was not simply a bad ankle sprain. She wrapped the ankle to alleviate pain, but by the next day it had worsened. Going to the emergency room on Sunday, it was confirmed she had fractured the ankle. Staying off an injured foot is not an easy thing to ask an active mother of two young girls! Terri is also coach of the Brown County High School dance team and practice continued. She operates her own bat rehabilitation service, BatWorld South Indy at her home. Despite all these demanding responsibilities, the doctor said it was best she keep off her foot as much as possible.

Within a week, Terri was up and active, this

time wearing a supportive tall boot to immobilize the entire foot. She was scheduled to present a bat talk at the DNR building within a few days at the Indiana State Fair. Not one to lose an opportunity to talk about her favorite topic, Terri had Brad drive her to the fairgrounds with some live bats and props to meet her program commitment. Terri joked with

other DNR employees working the fair that day, “The show must go on!”

We never truly realize the unwavering commitment some volunteers possess when they come to our DNR sites. A love of nature, the out-of-doors, people enjoying natural settings, is what brings applicants to interviews. As volunteer Bob Welsch once said coming to work, “I do it for me”. His time at the Nature Center is a time to enjoy. Both Bob and Terri have this in common: a love of the property and an attachment to people. We see this every time these two Brown County volunteers come to work. They have a desire to share what they know with many who visit. And some times, it’s the extra effort like Terri’s that helps confirm for us how lucky we are. Such performance is commendable and allows us see a good volunteer become a remarkable volunteer!



Brad (Smokey) & Terri Warne

# The Pond

By: Jim Eagleman, Brown County State Park Interpretive Naturalist

It started out like most ideas, with a vision of what it could become. This after a young Eagle Scout candidate approached me a few years ago. I say a few years; my file indicates it was 1987! For his project, he wanted to do something in the park "...to help wildlife". We talked and it was his mother who suggested a "watering hole", as she called it. There was no water provided for the birds and animals that came to the Nature Center feeders. Maybe there was space for a fountain, or "...a little pond" just outside the bird room's one-way window?

After some discussion, a site change proposal was submitted and approved by central office and other administrative work completed. Within a few weeks and after much planning by the scout, we had the bulldozer and operator scheduled. We were ready to dig. On a rainy day in late winter, a large dump truck hauled off damp soil, root clumps and rock.

"There's your pond", the operator yelled as he pulled away, chunks of wet mud tossed off his truck tires. The scout gave an apprehensive smile.

No, it appeared we had a hole in the ground. Measuring 40 feet in diameter and sloped to a depth of 6 feet at the center, it didn't look like much. Any wildlife in the area was surely spooked by the heavy equipment. But it was Brown County clay that was skimmed off and packed down; plenty left to hold water. After a soaking rain the same week, a muddy puddle collected in the shallow bottom.

The scout and his troop returned a few weeks later to build up the pond shoreline with sandstone slabs. They seeded and added straw to the bare soil, installed a split-rail fence, and hung a few bird houses. It rained again; more muddy water. When they left, he said he felt better and was pleased with the project. So was I.

Years later the scout returned. He was surprised to see the changes at the pond. This time he drove himself; he had grown a lot.

Recently I scanned the pond file. On faded, yellow note paper, entitled "Pond, 1987" is the list:

- 4/15- pond full, after more rains
- 4/17- peepers calling
- 4/20- toads calling; whirly-gig beetles
- 4/27- water striders, tiny tadpoles
- 5/16- dragonflies
- 5/25- big dead bass appears on shoreline (?)
- 5/29- bass disappears; yearling deer playing in water
- 6/11- cattails greening up gradually
- 6/14- more deer; buck bolts from water as vehicle appeared.



"If you build it, they will come", joked a fellow pond lover.

For 20 years, the Nature Center pond has continued to attract a variety of wildlife for visitors to see. A muddy shoreline on the south end lets us see footprints and helps document activity when we aren't there. Plenty of deer footprints; rabbits, too, that aren't seen during the day.

On the wall near the bird window, a sign with the "ingredients" all wildlife need is posted: food, shelter and water. After a Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary sign was added and pictures submitted, the National Wildlife Federation certified it as an official NWF bird area. The birds and animals don't need the sign or the certificate. A fountain's trickling water sounds, aquatic plants and turtle logs are indications enough they are welcomed.

Put in a pond and neat things happen. Tell visitors they can do the same on their property, show them what to do at pond management programs, and better conditions for wildlife are created. In time, landowners become aware of the activity around water, like we did. Before, they missed out; now they make their list. They excitedly tell us what they saw and share the message with neighbors.

Continued on pg 4



“The Pond” continued...

Over the years I’ve talked with countless visitors about our bird room speakers, types of seeds to offer, the one-way glass, feeder construction, and most often, the pond. The pond is the secret. “It’s a magnet”, said one homeowner. “I never imagined how busy a water source can be”.

We’ve seen changes in our pond, too. Long-time resident and seasonal naturalist, Jack Weddle once purposely introduced small Bluegill to use for fishing programs. Raccoons, skunks and a heron took care of what few fish remained, after the kids casted with long, dangling worms and too much fishing line. A few threads of line still hang from the trees.

In the last couple years we seined the pond with the public’s help. We removed the remaining fish and put them in Lake Strahl, since seasonals that followed Jack now wanted to hear frog and toad calls. You can’t have fish of any size if you expect to hear amphibian noises. After removing all the fish,

and keeping the turtles in a bucket, the water was drained. A few rainstorms later and help from a garden hose, we had the pond again. We also had noisy frogs calls to learn.

Now a little work is needed again. Algae blooms that result each summer can drain oxygen in small ponds; those with no water inlet. Stagnant water and no plant life can result. Keeping a pond aerobic (oxygen rich) encourages bacteria to flourish and feed on decomposing organic matter. We ordered an aerator that will be installed to help with nighttime “surface fluctuations”, the brochure claims.

Despite the work, I hope to have a pond on our own property some day. It’s a good trade off. I’ve seen enough benefit at the Nature Center pond to call it a success. As it changes, I watch to see the results. I don’t claim to be an expert, but I’ve learned a few things about ponds.

A pond can teach you things.



Jim Eagleman, Brittany Davis, Bob Welsch, Don Glass, and others enjoy a day of working (playing?) in the pond

Pond Day 2007



## Would you rather receive this newsletter through email?

If so, you may want to join the Indiana State Parks and Reservoirs Volunteer listserv. Receive this newsletter, tips on upcoming opportunities, and more, through email.

To sign up, simply visit:

**<http://lists.in.gov/mailman/listinfo/sprvolunteer>**

and enter your email address and name. Its that simple!

**\*\*Unless you sign up for the online mailing list, you will continue to receive your Volunteer View newsletter in the mail.**



## Kristy McNew



For the past several years, Kristy McNew has provided valuable service to the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services (UWIS) as a host at the Salamonie Interpretive

Center. She has also presented at special workshops that the UWIS offered over the years, especially for Senior citizens who have come to love her. In 2006, she devoted over 200 hours of service to the Upper Wabash Reservoirs, and is a great example of commitment to volunteering for Indiana State Parks and Reservoirs. Kristy volunteers every Sunday, greeting visitors, maintaining visitor counts and watching for visitors interested in making purchases from the Otter Run Tradin' Post in Salamonie's Interpretive Center. This dedication to always being at the Center allows staff to focus their efforts on projects away from the front desk and know that visitors are getting a warm welcome. Kristy also does a great job at stopping when she is unsure of an answer and calling on staff to assist the visitors with correct and timely information. She has also helped with teaching carving classes, playing music at special events, and preparing food for the special programs. With her support and involvement stretching back to 1986 when she first attended programs with her family, Kristy is a valuable asset to the Upper Wabash Interpretive Services and the DNR.

## Weekends of Pirates and Adventure

The help of volunteers was greatly appreciated

at two summer events at Monroe Reservoir, in the Paynetown State Recreation Area. Pirates invaded the weekend of August 10-12, and Jennifer Aynes returned with them. She coordinated the volunteers, who were reenactors both on the ship and in the pirate village, worked on set-up and management, and even helped the kiddies with their crafts.



Jennifer Aynes and a Pirate Pal

On August 30th, interpretive naturalist Gretchen Grossman recruited her roommate Jessie Johnson and boyfriend Ian Sutherland to volunteer during "Choose Your Own Adventure" Day for a local cub scout pack. Parents pitched in as well, and various stations were set up for the boys' first meeting of the year. What a way to kick off a year of scouting!



## Three Outstanding Volunteers

By: Coletta Prewitt, Volunteer Coordinator for Spring Mill State Park

Spring Mill State Park has several exceptional volunteers this season.

Marie De Paepe volunteers in the Pioneer Village 5 days a week putting in an average of 32 hours a week. She started in May working in the Village Mercantile two days a week on the storekeeper days off. She also helps the village staff as they prepare for programs, and assists with hands on craft programs.

Pam Shull was our VIP in August. She volunteered 154 hours cleaning fire pits, working at the camp gate, cleaning the nature center and

shelter houses. During special programs she could be found painting faces, demonstrating basket making and teaching children to make cornhusk dolls. In her spare time she makes baskets and cornhusk dolls for the mercantile to sell. When the VIP for September canceled, Pam offered to stay and fill the slot.

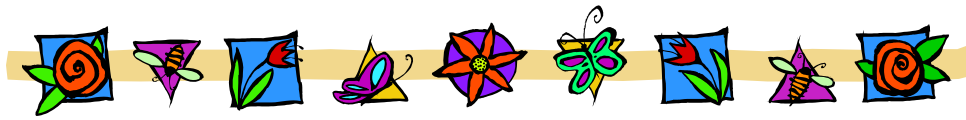
Larry Cramer has been a regular VIP. He is a man you can count on for special programs even if he isn't camping. He cleans up the campground, works at the camp gate as well as assisting the village staff by putting on rope making demonstrations that bring in hundreds of dollars in donations.





## Who-o-o is That? He Looks Familiar...

Mike Flowers was our seasonal naturalist at Patoka Lake Reservoir last year. He has returned this year as a volunteer helping with special events and roving the campgrounds with our resident barred owl. He loves doing programs with the box turtle, red-tailed hawk and barred owl. He is a natural when it comes to presenting programs and helping our visitors. The Visitor Center staff very much appreciates his help and the many hours he gives.



## Follow-Up: The Butterfly Garden at Mounds State Park

Last issue, we asked for volunteers to help create a butterfly garden. Look what was created! Be sure to check out page 9 for new volunteer opportunities.





## And She Looks Vaguely Familiar, Too...

No, she wasn't a Seasonal Interpreter last year. In fact, she's not quite old enough to be hired yet. Molly Schools will just have to keep volunteering at Pokagon and other state parks until she can try out her Mom's (Lise School's) footsteps. Lise was the full time interpretive naturalist at McCormick's Creek State Park before she began her own business, Interpretive Ideas.



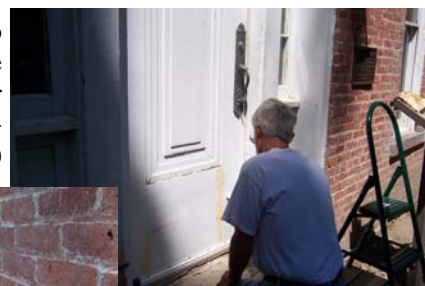
## Mounds State Park Volunteers– Busy as ever!

By: Angie Manuel, Mounds State Park Interpretive Naturalist

### The Bronnberg House

After months of historic preservation paperwork and much anticipated approvals, Friends members and park volunteers began the initial restoration of the Bronnberg family home at Mounds State Park. This historic home had been the nature center for over thirty years and had many not-so-historic features left behind, such as track lighting, a painted "forest" room, and built-in animal tanks. The amazingly talented volunteer group has scraped paint, patched plaster, repaired electrical problems, caulked, painted, and sanded the house back to a more appropriate looking 1840's home. Much more in-depth restoration will occur over the next few years, and the volunteers look forward to filling the house with antique furniture and lots of stories.

While volunteer Bob Daily (right) repairs the front door, Project leader Phil Hallenbeck reglazes a window (below)



Volunteer Tom Parker helps Phil prep windows for paint



### Pioneer Weekend 2007

Our annual pioneer weekend welcomed over 250 visitors and the volunteers showed off their talents by helping to make butter, dip candles, throw tomahawks, cook old-fashion foods like ham-n-beans and salty popcorn over an open fire, finger knit, and more.



Volunteer Ashley Parker teaches members of the public to finger knit



Interpretive Naturalist Angie Manuel and Jr. Volunteer Morgan McWilliams dip candles



Volunteer Scott McManigell enjoys lunch



Volunteer Mick McWilliams shows a young man how to throw a tomahawk.

# Turkey Run and Shades State Parks Volunteer Report

By: Barbara Cummings, Interpretive Naturalist for Turkey Run and Shades State Parks

Our volunteers have had a busy year at Turkey Run and Shades State Parks. There isn't room here to include each and every accomplishment, but the following are highlights that show the enormity of their efforts, and give some idea of the positive impacts the volunteers have had on the parks.

The Friends of Turkey Run and Shades successfully wrote a grant to replace field guides and children's books and added many additional books on natural and cultural history. Our library is brimming with new and interesting information, and we've received many compliments and thanks from our park visitors and interpretive staff.

Two volunteers are filling and maintaining a honeybee observation hive in the nature center. The exhibit draws lots of visitors and has inspired a number of impromptu interpretive talks given by informed visitors - an unexpected boon for the interpretive program!

Several dedicated volunteers have assisted with 4 special events over the summer, including our Heritage Days and Archaeology Day. These volunteers have helped make it possible for hundreds of visitors to experience facets of our natural and cultural history hands-on.

One of our most visible and remarkable volunteer efforts is our Heritage Kitchen Garden. This living history exhibit is researched, planned,



Volunteer Rich Scott helps visitors dig into edible and medicinal plants during Turkey Run's Heritage Festival.

planted, maintained and harvested exclusively by dedicated, creative, and hard working volunteers. It graphically depicts an everyday part of life in the early 1800s, and has the



The heritage kitchen garden brings history alive at Turkey Run's Salmon Lusk Home.

added benefit of successfully inspiring visitors to try heritage gardening at home. Located in the back yard of the Salmon Lusk Home, it has provided an exciting climax during tours of this beautiful historic home.



The popular Turkey Run Nature Center honeybee observation hive has inspired many impromptu volunteer interpretive talks.

Park volunteers have put on several workshops this year, and removed litter from our trails and parking lots and invasive plants from the nature preserves. They have assisted with vegetative surveys that support our deer reductions, and have maintained a butterfly-hummingbird garden.

Our Friends Group financed a live raptor program. Work continues on our volunteer floral inventory as volunteers mount a diverse

collection of Turkey Run plants in preparation for placement in the Friesner Herbarium at Butler University. And a succession of brave volunteers spent weeks at a time living in our campground assisting our campers and promoting the interpretive program.

In these days of more work with fewer employees, the volunteers at Turkey Run and Shades are critical to the operation of the parks and interpretive services. Without their help and encouragement, we simply could not offer the quantity and range of programs and experiences our visitors have come to expect. Words cannot express our gratitude and appreciation for the sacrifice of time and energy each of our volunteers makes on behalf of our parks.



## Help Wanted!

### Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

#### Monroe Reservoir Fall Fun Weekend October 19-21 at Paynetown SRA

Volunteers wanted for help with kids' activities, setting up for the band in the evening, with the campfire, and more. To find out where you can be most helpful, contact Gretchen Grossman at

[monroeinterp@dnr.in.gov](mailto:monroeinterp@dnr.in.gov) or 812-837-9967.

To find out more about the Fall Fun Weekend, visit <http://www.in.gov/dnr/parklake/interpretiveservices/.pdf/schedules/>



#### Turkey Run and Shades State Parks

are seeking volunteers to help with a number of projects. We need more volunteers for all of the activities mentioned in our volunteer report in this newsletter (see page 8). We're also looking for carpenters, folks with GPS and GIS experience, a volunteer coordinator, folks or groups to adopt trails, and someone familiar with geocaching who would be willing to organize and put on a Geocaching event at one or both parks. For more information or to join our volunteer program contact Barbara Cummings at [bcummings@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:bcummings@dnr.IN.gov) or 765-597-2654.



#### Spring Mill State Park

is looking for volunteers interested in the space program that would like to answer questions and lead groups in the Grissom Memorial. Anyone interested should contact: Coletta Prewitt Volunteer Coordinator, Spring Mill State Park (812) 849-4129



#### Volunteers Make a Difference!

We just received these words of praise from a visitor:

"My family and I spent October 6th at Spring Mill State Park. It was unseasonably hot (high 80's) and, so, we weren't able to spend the time we wanted to spend visiting the structures and visiting with the pioneers. It was a very nice day. I learned a lot about my home state. The pioneers in the park were awesome. Please give our special thanks to the mill guide who gave us a wonderful presentation about the mill and to the soldiers and ladies who posed with our kids. They were all friendly and informed and, well, it was just cool and they made it special. Also, please thank the guide [Everett Rance] at the Gus Grissom Memorial. His passion for Gus' history and the history of spaceflight was impressive. His willingness to talk with us helped us relive history and helped make modern history real. Thanks to all of DNR, but thanks especially to these folks - for a great weekend and for their dedication."



### Talk about Giant!

Carol Scott takes a break from volunteering at Turkey Run and Shades State Parks to vacation at Hovey Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area, where she finds *Ambrosia trifida*– giant ragweed.

**Do you have questions, comments, or suggestions about the *Volunteer View*?**

**Would you like to contribute?**

**Please feel free to contact me:**

Sarah R. Schenk, Stewardship Section Assistant  
IDNR Div. of State Parks and Reservoirs  
402 W. Washington, Room W298  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
Phone: 317-234-5288  
Email: [SSchenk@dnr.in.gov](mailto:SSchenk@dnr.in.gov)

**I look forward to hearing from you!**



**DNR**

The mission of Indiana's State Parks and Reservoirs is to manage and interpret our properties' unique natural, wildlife and cultural resources using principles of multiple use and preservation, while sustaining the integrity of these resources for current and future generations.

